(b) whether the US Energy Secretary has sought India's partnership in its efforts to study and analyse the present situation in the global oil and gas markets in the light of growing world demand; and

(c) if so, to what extent Government have agreed to accept the offer by the US?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Department of Energy, United States of America (USA) has sought India's participation in the Committee on Global Oil and Gas constituted by National Petroleum Council to advise the Secretary of Energy, USA on oil and natural gas matters. While the primary focus is oil and natural gas, the study will also examine other energy source (e.g. coal, nuclear and alternative fuels) and environmental issues. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

Besides the above, the Indo-US Coal Working Group is actively pursuing various areas of cooperation in the Coal Sector.

**Shortage of oil and gas**

2982. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHARTIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether crude oil and natural gas production in the country over the last four years of the current Five year Plan has been almost stagnant;

(b) whether the crude oil production during the period stood at around 33 million metric tonne, while gas production as about 31-32 billion cubic meters;

(c) whether the reason for this static oil and gas production includes the natural declilne in the ageing field producing fuels; and

(d) if so, the steps Government proposed to take to meet the shortage of crude oil and natural gas in the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Crude Oil production

during Tenth Five Year Plan ranged between 31-33 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) and natural gas production was about 31-32 Billion Cubic Metric (BCM). The main reason of stagnant production was natural decline of the aging field. ONGC, Oil and Private/Joint Venture companies are implementing Improved Oil Recovery/Enhanced oil Recovery techniques to arrest the decline in oil & gas production. In addition, following steps have been taken to enhance oil & gas security for the country:

(1) Offering of Exploration blocks through New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(b) Faster development of oil & gas discoveries.

(c) Acquisition of oil & gas assets abroad.

(d) Focusing on alternate sources such as Coal Bed Methane (CBM), Gas hydrates, Undergroiund Coal Gasification (UCG) etc.

**Supply of kerosene oil to ration card holders**

†2983. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide additional kerosene oil to the APL ration card holders of the families above the poverty line;

(b) if so, the quantity of additional oil that will be provided; and

(c) whether this will not affect the BPL ration card holders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to provide additional kerosene oil under Public Distribution System (PDS) to Above Poverty Line (APL) ration card holders.

(b) and (c) Does not arise, in view of reply of part (a) above.

**Production of CBM in Jharkhand**

†2984. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the current status of scheme for production of methane in coal-beds in Jharkhand by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.